

**Council Chambers, Municipal Building, Baraboo, Wisconsin
Tuesday, January 7, 2020 –7:00 p.m.**

Mayor Palm called the special meeting of Council to order.

Roll call was taken.

Council Members Present: Wedekind, Kolb, Plautz, Kent, Petty, Ellington, Alt, Kierzek, Thurow
Council Members Absent:

Others Present: Adm. Downing, Atty. Truman, Clerk Zeman, Treasurer Laux, Fire Chief Stieve, EMS Director Sechler, Asst. Fire Chief Willer, members of the press and others.

Moved by Kolb, seconded by Alt and carried to approve the agenda.

Compliance with the Open Meeting Law was noted.

PUBLIC INVITED TO SPEAK

Kilton Holmes, 126 1st Street Apt. #3, Baraboo: He suggests that the district will probably have to look at outsourcing to some degree because things are getting more complicated and staff levels; more staffing at the EMS level and less administration. Outsourcing can be a big plus for many organizations.

Ben Wolter, 5305 Russett Rd, Madison: As a former Baraboo District Ambulance employee, along with many current employees, he is not surprised by the financial shortfall. Many issues, including issues with the billing department, were brought up by employees who had tried to present them to the chain of command as well as members of the City. The employees feel their concerns were ignored and he worries that the results of tonight's meeting might be the same. At the time he was an employee, the service was poorly and professionally bankrupt; and now it's financially as well. He feels Director Sechler will try to point the blame on other employees but these concerns were presented directly to Sechler multiple times, by multiple employees, and entirely ignored. He feels nothing will change as long as Director Sechler is in charge. The current audit is showing a loss of ½ million dollars due to mismanagement; this will have to come out of the pockets of City residents and this is not fair. He strongly encourages the Council to look at this closely; look at the history, the previous audit and realize that this is not the fault of the employees, the employees that often put their lives on the line. The proper decision is to find a new Director.

Rob Nelson, 318 Remington St, Baraboo: Spoke in favor of encouraging the Council to conduct as much of this meeting in Open Session as possible. He noted that State Statutes 19.85(1)(e) is restrictive rather than expansive when it comes to the subject of Closed Meetings. He also noted the Wisconsin Open Meeting Law Compliance Guide, "When a governmental body seeks to convene in closed session under Wis. Stat. § 19.85(1)(e), the burden is on the body to show that competitive or bargaining interests require closure...Competitive or bargaining reasons permit a closed session where the discussion will directly and substantially affect negotiations with a third party, but not where the discussions might be one of several factors that indirectly influence the outcome of those negotiations." The ambulance is a very important public service in Baraboo and he is hoping the public can be privy to tonight's discussion.

MAYOR'S BUSINESS

The purpose of today's meeting is to receive the financial audit from Baker Tilly regarding the Baraboo District Ambulance Service ("BDAS") and for the Council to discuss the report with Baker Tilly as it pertains to the City's contractual agreement with BDAS and the City's investment of public funds into BDAS.

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Moved by Ellington, seconded by Kolb, to enter into Committee of the Whole to hear and discuss the report from Baker Tilly regarding the BDAS financial audit.

CLOSED SESSION

Moved by Petty, seconded by Kierzek to go into Closed Session with the exception of Baraboo Ambulance District Commission members, as well as City of Baraboo Finance Staff, City Clerk, former Adm. Ed Geick and current Adm. Kennie Downing. Ald. Petty believes this issue will ultimately involve personnel issues, third party vendors, as well as the reputation of the Baraboo District Ambulance service. He also believes that part of the deliberations will be the expenditure of monies into BDAS, which is a contractual relationship the City has with BDAS. Motion passes, 6 ayes; 3 nays, Kolb, Plautz, Ellington. The Mayor announced that the Council will go into Closed Session according to §19.85(1)(e), Wis. Stats, for the purposes of deliberating or negotiating the purchasing of public properties, the investing of public funds, or conducting other specified public business, whenever competitive or bargaining reasons require a closed session (hear/discuss the BDAS financial audit and the City's investment of public funds in and contractual arrangement with BDAS).

Council Members Present: Wedekind, Kolb, Plautz, Kent, Petty, Ellington, Alt, Kierzek, Thurow
Council Members Absent:

Others Present: Mayor Palm, Admin. Downing, Clerk Zeman, Atty. Truman, Treasurer Laux, E. Geick, Timothy Voncina (Baker Tilly), Tom Garvey (Baker Tilly), Jacob Bach (Baker Tilly)

OPEN SESSION

Moved by Petty, seconded by Kolb to go into Open Session. Motion carries; 1 nay, Thurow. The Mayor announces that the Council will return to Open Session as per §19.85(2), Wis. Stats., to address any business that may be the result of discussions conducted in Closed Session.

Moved by Kolb, seconded by Alt to rise and return from Committee of the Whole into regular session.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Ellington, seconded by Petty, and carried on voice vote, that the meeting adjourn at 10:03pm.

Brenda Zeman, City Clerk